

# Sierra Squawker



[www.centralsierraaudubon.org](http://www.centralsierraaudubon.org)

June - 2022

*CSAS Annual Meeting & Potluck*

*Saturday, June 4, at 5pm*

*Join us for an enjoyable social time!*



Our annual meeting this year will be an in-person social event in the beautiful grounds of our Programs VP, Ralph Retherford, in Sonora just like last year.

Although we have to formally elect the Board members for the coming twelve months, this will primarily be a social event where you can meet old friends and talk to your heart's content in this more open atmosphere. You will also meet one of our scholarship recipients on her way to a career that will serve wildlife and birds.

We will also be able to relax and enjoy a light musical interlude; you may not know, but Ralph Retherford and Paolo Maffei are accomplished and enthusiastic singers, so they will lead us in a chorus of ditties by the brilliant and iconoclastic Tom Lehrer. If you know his songs, you can join in, and if you don't - be prepared to be amused, scandalized and impressed by these witty ditties! So, "be prepared".

This will be a potluck and you can either share with others or stay with your own food as you see fit under these lingering covid circumstances. Bring your own food and drink along with plate, cup and utensils.

**Location:** 20405 Lyons Bald Mountain Road, Sonora, CA 95370 (look for the Audubon meeting sign at the house entrance). See detailed map on our website at: <https://centralsierraaudubon.org/meetings/>

Our brief Officer elections for 2022-23 will take place by voice vote at this meeting, with candidates as below:

- Barry Boulton - **President**
- Ralph Retherford - **VP Programs**
- Gail Witzlsteiner - **Director-at-Large**
- Linda Millspaugh - **Treasurer**
- Jean Dakota - **Secretary**

**Note:** you will not be press-ganged into any of these roles because all of the above have accepted their nominations. But, if you wish to train with us for a role in the future, just mention it to one of us at this meeting.

The May 18 presentation by *Tom Hahn* entitled "*Labontan Cutthroat: a Comeback Story*" is on-line at: <https://youtu.be/W5fcDkSgKY>

**Note:** all prior CSAS Zoom presentation URLs are shown on our website home page at <https://centralsierraaudubon.org/>

## **MAY FIELD TRIPS**

***Note: our website (<https://centralsierraadubon.org/>) contains maps for each field trip and will also indicate cancellations due to weather or other reason, so, if in doubt, check it out!***

### ***Wednesday, June 1 - Groveland Community Services District (GCSD)***

Please join me Wednesday June 1st. for our next Field Trip to the Groveland Community Services District. I expect there will be more Spring Migrants, Warblers, Flycatchers, Vireos etc. to see. On our last visit in May we saw 35 species. Special viewings included Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Wood Ducks, Ash-throated Flycatcher and 4 swallow species. Many of these were our target species. A surprise was a beautiful Ruddy Duck in breeding plumage, with a lovely red brown body, brilliant white cheek patch and a bright blue bill. However, another favorite sighting was not a bird. It was a leucistic young male deer! When it came bounding across a grassy area I thought at first it was a goat! Extraordinary! We were also pleased to welcome back Jeanne Ridgley, our former Trip Leader, who has recovered from a recent fall.



***Leucistic deer  
Photo by Cyril Ashe***

Meet the group in the GCSD parking lot at 8:00 AM. Bring binoculars and a birding guide if you have one. The walk will last about two-three hours.

***Kit DeGear (925)822-5215, or [kdegear@gmail.com](mailto:kdegear@gmail.com)***

### ***Friday, June 10 - Fahey Meadow***

This is an interesting habitat outside of Long Barn that I have enjoyed exploring for several years. Last year the highlight of the trip occurred on the way to Fahey. There is a bend in the road with a water seep that tends to attract a few birds and I usually make a brief stop. Well, we ended up seeing 40 species! We were all thrilled and spent an hour there. We of course will stop this year, too, but I cannot guarantee such variety. While we may not see a high number of species at the Meadow, I believe we will see some more unusual ones. Highlights from past visits have included Calliope Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow and some Warblers and Flycatchers, as well. Please bring snacks/lunch, water and sunscreen.

We will meet at the Mi-Wok Ranger Station (along Hwy 108 less than 10 minutes above Twain Harte) at 8:00 am. We hope to have car pooling available for fully vaccinated attendees or at the discretion of those driving. It will be about a 40 minute drive from the ranger station. We will make a brief pit stop at the North Fork Day Use Area on our way out. There are no facilities at the Meadow. We will return to this site for our lunch where there are picnic tables overlooking the river. We got to see an American Dipper here last time! The trip will involve walking on mostly level terrain of about a mile. We should be back to the ranger station by 1:30 or 2:00 pm.

For this trip, please RSVP (in case there are any changes) to Kit DeGear. Call or text my cell at (925)822-5215 or email me at [kdegear@gmail.com](mailto:kdegear@gmail.com)

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## **MAY FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

### ***May 3 - Westside Trail***

Eight dedicated Birders joined me for a morning walk along this old railroad trail for great views of the Tuolumne River below, wild flowers and birds above. This walk yielded 12 bird species and lots of wildflowers. One highlight was the Black Headed Grosbeak who was singing his/ her heart out, another highlight was a Flycatcher that we could not specifically identify the subspecies, and a mystery bird 75 feet in the air that resembled a hummer with a long beak. The wild flowers were prevalent, with the Chinese Lanterns and Mariposa Lilies as two favorites.

Our birding experts included Tom Parrington, Paolo Maffei, and Cyril Ashe. Sheila Shanahan used the Merlin app to identify the Orange Crowned Warbler (which we could only hear and not see). Welcome to a new birder, Gary Lee. Thank you to everyone who participated.

*Jean Dakota*

### ***May 12 - Wards Ferry Walk***

On Thursday, May 12, after a three week rain delay, nine birders gathered at the Parrington Barn for another walk along Wards Ferry Road to beyond the intersection with Algerine Wards Ferry Road. Perfect weather in the mid-60s. Bird sightings totaled 36 species with highlights that included a Golden Eagle, Phainopepla, a Western Tanager, and the usual Western Kingbird in the open pasture area. Our resident bird identification specialists for this walk were Ron and Barbara McDow, and Kit DeGear who spotted more bird species that I have seen all year. In addition to the walk along the Road, most of us walked through the neighboring Kiriluk Ranch to the overlook into Turnback Creek with its unusual limestone formations. Lunch at the barn followed. Here's the eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109812136>

*Tom Parrington*

### ***May 19 - Confidence Trail***

The weather cooperated by providing the 10 attendees with an absolutely lovely morning. While Tom Hahn was not able to lead us this year, lending us his superlative birding skills, several of us came armed with the Merlin App which now includes a bird song/call ID feature. Tom was missed but the app worked great, particularly on those tricky Warblers! Highlights included Orange-crowned, Nashville, MacGillivray's and Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireo, White-headed Woodpeckers, Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks as well as the Olive-sided Flycatcher. I hope that Tom will be able to join us next year! View the eBird checklist on-line at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S110685356>

*Kit DeGear*



*Birding group on the Confidence Trail.*

*Photo by  
Claire Chateauneuf*

### ***May 29 - Indigeny***

Four of us appreciated the cool morning knowing that hot summer temperatures will soon arrive. This trip we did get to see the striking Bullock's Oriole. As an added bonus we came across its nest! We were able to observe both the male and female. Other highlights included viewing a gorgeous male Western Tanager, Western Wood-Pee-wee, a Bewick's Wren and an Osprey. Today's total was 32 species, and here is the eBird link: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S111646195>

I will be taking a break this summer but walks will resume next fall in September.

*Kit DeGear*

*Bullock's Oriole nest - the orange ball  
in the center of the photo*

*Photo by Kit DeGear*

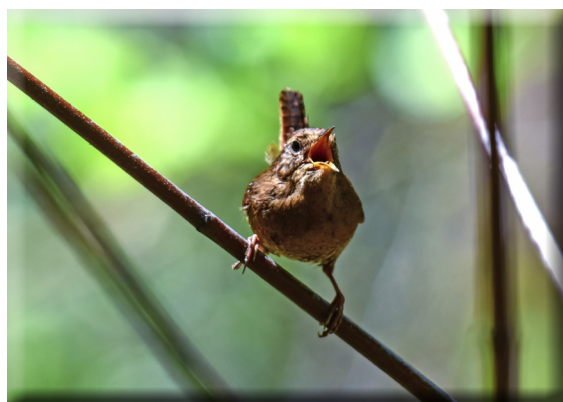




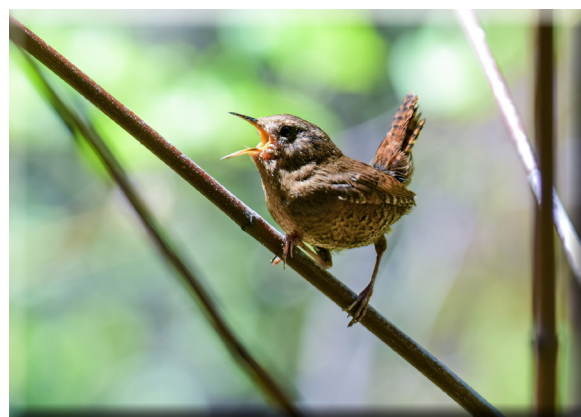
## *Birding at Calaveras Big Trees State Park*

**B**ill Bowie, Cyril Ashe and I took an impromptu trip to the Big Trees on May 11 and enjoyed an interesting day of birding. We had heard they were about to start their prescribed burns which can cause smokey conditions for a few weeks. I was really hoping for a good look at the Pacific Wren - no problem there, as several were up and singing all along the North Grove Trail. The White-headed Woodpeckers were quite abundant, too. In all, 25 species were observed. A great day topped off by Cyril alerting us to an American Dipper down by the bridge and river. View the eBird checklist online at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109274991>

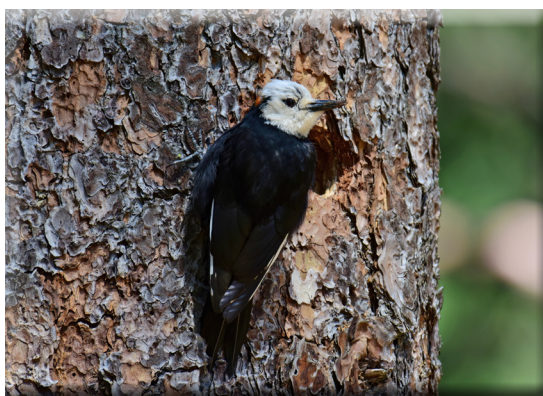
*Kit DeGear*



*Pacific Wren singing  
with great enthusiasm  
- and hope!*



*White-headed Woodpecker*



*Photos by  
Cyril Ashe*

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### ***Central Sierra Audubon Society - CSAS***

(Chapter of the National Audubon Society)  
P.O. Box 3047, Sonora, CA 95370

***Public Meetings:*** As of this month, April 2022, we will hold monthly in-person meetings in the Sonora Library as we did before covid, and simultaneously share them on Zoom so that you have flexibility in attendance. Monthly details shown in the Squawker and on our website at [www.centralsierraaudubon.org](http://www.centralsierraaudubon.org)

***Board Meetings:*** Please call Barry Boulton (209)596-0612.

### ***Membership of National Audubon & CSAS***

If you are not already a member, we would be honored to have you join us. You can join as a full member of National Audubon Society, which includes dues for CSAS membership, or you may join solely as a local member of CSAS in which case you will receive the monthly Squawker newsletter and be privy to all other CSAS activities.

An application form for local membership is available on the CSAS website at: [www.centralsierraaudubon.org/join-us/](http://www.centralsierraaudubon.org/join-us/)

### ***CSAS Officers***

Barry Boulton, President	(209)596-0612
Tom Parrington, Conservation	(209)928-3835
Ralph Retherford, VP Programs	(209)770-6124
Jean Dakota, Secretary	(209)591-9952
Linda Millspaugh, Treasurer	(209)586-9557
Kit DeGear, Field Trips	(925)822-5215
Gail Witzlsteiner, Director at Large	(209)586-4025
Jan Jorn-Baird, Publicity	(209)532-1106

### ***CSAS Committee Chairs***

Bird Box Trail - Gail Witzlsteiner	(209)586-4025
Book/Bird Box Sales - Jean Dakota	(209)591-9952
Scholarship - Gail Witzlsteiner	(209)586-4025
Website - Barry Boulton	(209)596-0612
Newsletter Editor - Barry Boulton	(209)596-0612
Education - Kit DeGear	(925)822-5215
YSS delegate - Walt Kruse	(707)548-1829